

Science and Success, Second Edition: Sex Education and Other Programs that Work to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, HIV & Sexually Transmitted Infections

Until recently, teen pregnancy and birth rates had declined in the United States. Despite these declines, US teen birth and sexually transmitted infection (STI) rates remain among the highest in the industrialized world. Given the need to focus limited prevention resources on effective programs, Advocates for Youth undertook exhaustive reviews of existing research to compile a list of those programs proven effective by rigorous evaluation. Nineteen programs appeared in *Science and Success* when it was first published in 2003; seven additional programs are included in *Science and Success, Second Edition*.

Criteria for Inclusion—The programs included in this document all had evaluations that:

- Were published in peer-reviewed journals (a proxy for the quality of the evaluation design and analysis);
- Used an experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation design, with treatment and control / comparison conditions;
- Included at least 100 young people in treatment and control / comparison groups.

Further, the evaluations either:

- Continued to collect data from both groups at three months or later after intervention

And

- Demonstrated that the program led to at least two positive behavior changes among program youth, relative to controls:
 - Postponement or delay of sexual initiation;
 - Reduction in the frequency of sexual intercourse;
 - Reduction in the number of sexual partners / increase in monogamy;
 - Increase in the use, or consistency of use, of effective methods of contraception and/or condoms;
 - Reduction in the incidence of unprotected sex.

Or:

- Showed effectiveness in reducing rates of pregnancy, STIs, or HIV in intervention youth, relative to controls.

Program Effects— Twenty-six programs met the criteria described above. These 26 programs were able to affect the behaviors and/or sexual health outcomes of youth exposed to the program.

Risk Avoidance Through Abstinence— 14 programs demonstrated a statistically significant delay in the timing of first sex among program youth, relative to comparison / control youth. One of these programs is an intervention for elementary school children and their parents. The other 13 programs target middle and high school youth and all include information about both abstinence and contraception, among other topics and/or services. (See Table A, Page 3-4)

Risk Reduction for Sexually Active Youth— Many of the programs also demonstrated reductions in other sexual risk-taking behaviors among participants relative to comparison / control youth. (See Table A, Page 3-4)

- 14 programs helped sexually active youth to increase their use of condoms.
- 9 programs demonstrated success at increasing use of contraception other than condoms.
- 13 programs showed reductions in the number of sex partners and/or increased monogamy among program participants.
- 7 programs assisted sexually active youth to reduce the frequency of sexual intercourse.
- 10 programs helped sexually active youth to reduce the incidence of unprotected sex.

Reduced Rates of Teenage Pregnancy or Sexually Transmitted Infections— Thirteen programs showed statistically significant declines in teen pregnancy, HIV or other STIs. Nine demonstrated a statistically significant impact on teenage pregnancy among program participants and four, a reduced trend in STIs among participants when measured against comparison / control youth. (See Table A, Page 3-4)

Increased Receipt of Health Care or Increased Compliance with Treatment Protocols— Six programs achieved improvements in youth's receipt of health care, and/or compliance with treatment protocols. (See Table A, Page 3-4)

Program Content— Of the 26 effective programs described here, 23 included information about abstinence *and* contraception within the context of sexual health education. Of the three that did not include sexual health education, two were early childhood interventions and one was a service-learning program.

Following is a brief description of each of the 26 programs. For more detailed descriptions, please see *Science and Success*, Second Edition, Advocates for Youth, 2008, or visit www.advocatesforyouth.org/programsthatwork/.

Table A. Effective Programs: Impact on Adolescents' Risk for Pregnancy, HIV & STI Programs

☐ School-Based Programs
 ☐ Community-Based Programs
 ☐ Clinic-Based Programs

	<i>Delayed Initiation of Sex</i>	<i>Reduced Frequency of Sex</i>	<i>Reduced Number of Sex Partners</i>	<i>Increased Monogamy</i>	<i>Reduced Incidence of Unprotected Sex</i>	<i>Increased Use of Condoms</i>	<i>Increased Use of Contraception</i>	<i>Increased Use of Sexual Health Care/ Treatment Compliance</i>	<i>Reduced Incidence of STIs</i>	<i>Decreased Number or Rate of Teen Pregnancy / Birth</i>
1. AIDS Prevention for Adolescents in School			★	★		★			★	
2. Get Real about AIDS			★			★				
3. Postponing Sexual Involvement (Augmenting a Five-Session Human Sexuality Curriculum)	★	★					★			
4. Postponing Sexual Involvement: Human Sexuality & Health Screening	★						★			
5. Reach for Health Community Youth Service	★	★				★	★			
6. Reducing the Risk	★				★		★			
7. Safer Choices	★				★	★	★	★		
8. School / Community Program for Sexual Risk Reduction among Teens	★					★				★
9. Seattle Social Development Project	★		★			★				★
10. Self Center (School-Linked Reproductive Health Care)	★				★		★	★		★
11. Teen Outreach Program										★
12. Abecedarian Project										★
13. Adolescents Living Safely: AIDS Awareness, Attitudes & Actions		★	★			★				

Note: Blank boxes indicate either 1) that the program did not measure nor aim at this particular outcome/impact or 2) that the program did not achieve a significant positive outcome in regard to the particular behavior or impact.

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14. Be Proud! Be Responsible!		★	★			★				
15. Becoming a Responsible Teen	★	★			★	★				
16. California's Adolescent Sibling Pregnancy Prevention Project	★						★			★
17. Children's Aid Society – Carrera Program	★					★	★	★		★
18. Community-level HIV Prevention for Adolescents in Low-Income Developments	★					★				
19. ¡Cuidate!		★	★		★	★				
20. Making Proud Choices!	★	★			★	★				
21. Poder Latino: Community AIDS Prevention Program for Inner-City Latino Youth	★		★							
22. HIV Risk Reduction for African American & Latina Adolescent Women			★		★				★	
23. Project SAFE: Sexual Awareness for Everyone			★	★	★			★	★	
24. SiHLE			★		★	★			★	★
25. Tailoring Family Planning Services to the Special Needs of Adolescents							★	★		★
26. TLC: Together Learning Choices			★		★			★		

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